



The US Army as a Military Profession

CSA Army Profession Symposium

(30-31 July, West Point)



*The U.S. Army as a Military Profession
(After a Decade plus of War, and
During a Defense Reduction)*

for

*CSA Army Profession Symposium
United States Military Academy
West Point, NY
30-31 July 2014*

Don M. Snider, PhD



Discussion Agenda

- **The Army as a Military Profession**
- **The Army's New Doctrine of Profession**
- **The Army's Professional Ethic**
- **The Current "Values to Virtues" Gap**



BLUF from Snider

- The Army is not a profession because it says so! Profession is not even the default character of the Army.
- Captains, Majors, Sergeants, and Army Civilians cannot make the Army a military profession; but they must do their part. Primarily the senior Stewards must make the Army a profession – COLs, GOs, SESs, and SGMs
- Professions are quintessentially human, moral institutions of expert work; using individual moral judgments!
Requires Moral Courage!
- We have a “Values to Virtues” Gap; and, Beware:
Builddowns bureaucratize!!



How can I be a Professional... if there is no Profession?

(an Army Major, 1999)

What professions do...

- Provide a vital service to the society which it cannot provide for itself, but must have to flourish...
- Work with expert (abstract) knowledge developed into human expertise... not routine or repetitive work...takes years of study and experiential learning...
- Earn and maintain the Trust of their society by the effective, ethical, and efficient application of their expertise...the means of social control is the Ethic...
- Are, therefore, granted relative autonomy in the application of their art and expertise...



Army Chronology

- 14 June 1775 – the American Continental Army
- 4 July 1776 – Declaration of Independence
- 15 November 1777 – Articles of Confederation
- 17 September 1787 – The Constitution
- 1880-1904 – The U.S Army professionalized
- In 2014: 239 years an Army (1775)
125 years a military profession (1889)



Profession vs. Bureaucracy

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|-----|---------------------------|
| ▪ Expert knowledge | vs. | Non-expert knowledge |
| ▪ Accepts life-long learning | vs. | “You develop me” |
| ▪ New situations | vs. | Routine situations |
| ▪ “Practice” by humans | vs. | Work done by (all) |
| ▪ Unlimited personal liability | vs. | Little personal liability |
| ▪ Invests in humans first | vs. | SOPs; soft/hard ware |
| ▪ Measure – effectiveness | vs. | Efficiency |
| ▪ Trust relationship w/client | vs. | Public market |
| ▪ Granted some autonomy | vs. | Closely supervised |
| ▪ Develops worldview | vs. | None inherent |
| ▪ Maintain ethos, self-policed | vs. | Externally imposed |
| ▪ Intrinsic motivations | vs. | Extrinsic motivations |
| ▪ A life-long “calling” | vs. | A job |

Negotiated Jurisdictions of The Army Profession, 2014



A Quintessential Act of Professional Practice

- Based on his/her expert knowledge...
- A member of the profession who is facing a new situation or task...
- Classifies the task (estimate/diagnosis), reasons about it (inferring from abstract knowledge applicable to the new task/situation), and then acts on it (execution/action).
- Follows the action, evaluating it for effectiveness and, ultimately, adaptations to...
- The profession's body of expert knowledge and its jurisdiction of expert work
- The "practice" ... the repetitive exercise of discretionary judgment, action, and follow-up... all decisions with high moral content

Why Do We Care?

- ◆ Professions offer two unique characteristics to the nation that bureaucratic organizations do not:
 - Expert Knowledge
 - ◆ Professions create and expand expert knowledge while,
 - ◆ Bureaucracies (and businesses) apply the knowledge that professions have developed and discarded.
 - Social Control
 - ◆ Professional ethics develops the most powerful means of controlling individual behavior in large groups that are functioning under ambiguous, chaotic and dangerous circumstances, such as war.
 - ◆ Bureaucratic controls, usually based on promotion and monetary rewards, have limited ability to control people in these situations.

Development of Soldiers and leaders who can make the right choices, and act on them effectively, during the heat of battle are essential to a successful American Army.



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The Army Profession Campaign (2011)

- The *Army Profession Campaign (2011)* was a US Army effort internally initiated to look critically at itself, as directed by the Secretary of the Army and the Chief of Staff of the Army
- The *Army Profession Campaign (2011)* was not in reaction to any one incident or issue
- The US Army has performed exceptionally well during the decade of war, meeting and exceeding its Nation's call
 - Demonstrated great strengths in adaptability of young leaders and dedication to service through multiple deployments
 - Also struggled in some areas to maintain the highest standards of the profession
- Self-reflection is what effective professions do and a natural part of the US Army's culture – "After Action Review"

Army Chief of Staff's Guiding Questions

The time is right to ask ourselves:

- 1. What does it mean for the Army to be a Profession?**
- 2. What does it mean to be a professional?**
- 3. After nine years of war (as of October 2010), how are we as individual professionals and as a profession meeting these aspirations?**

Current State of Trust

LEVEL	STATEMENT	RESPONSE
INDIVIDUAL/GROUP	“I trust other members of this unit/org”	67% Agree
	“I can trust my subordinates to fully support my directive”	67% Agree
	“The Army allows candid opinions without fear of repercussions”	25% Agree
	“People can make an honest mistake without ruining their career”	40% Agree
ORG/INSTL	“The Army no longer demonstrates that it is committed to me as much as it expects me to be committed”	40% Agree
	“When an Army Senior Leader says something, you can believe it is true”	20% Disagree
PUBLIC	“Trust elected and appointed civilian officials to do what is best for the Army”	38% Disagree
	“Members of the Army have a great deal of respect for media”	13% Agree



Army Profession Campaign Conclusions

1. No doctrine exists for the Army Profession
2. Cultural dysfunction exists; not living the Army Values
3. Significant lack of confidence in leader competence and candor, a trust issue
4. Certification systems lack rigor and credibility
5. Professional military education undervalued and underutilized
6. Too much variance in standards and basic discipline
7. Some personnel policies are outdated and don't support career needs

What We Learned During the 2011-12 Campaign

Five Essential Characteristics of the Army Profession

**Military
Expertise**



Our Ethical Application
of Land Combat Power

**Honorable
Service**



Our Noble Calling to
Service and Sacrifice

Trust



**The Bedrock of
our Profession**

**Esprit de
Corps**



Our Winning Spirit

**Stewardship of
the Profession**



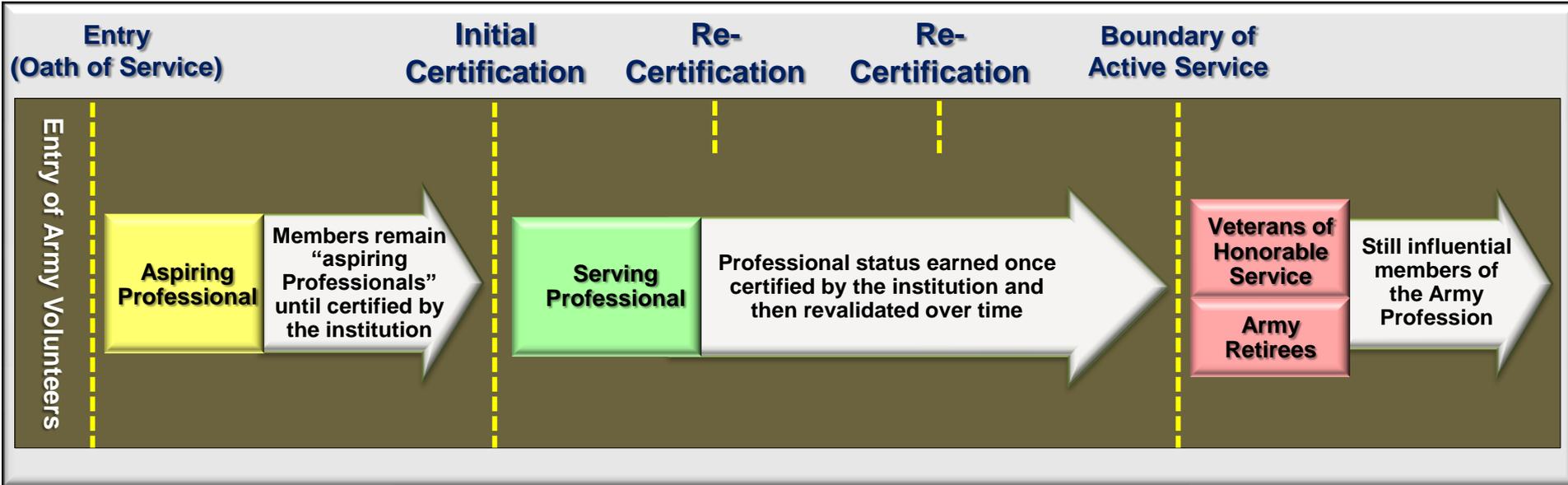
Our Long Term
Responsibility

**Trust between Soldiers
Trust between Soldiers and Leaders
Trust between Soldiers, their Families and the Army
Trust between the Army and the American People**

Loyalty • Duty • Respect • Selfless Service • Honor • Integrity • Personal Courage
Ethical Foundation: Legal and Moral



Professional Certification Criteria



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COMPETENCE in the performance of duty

CHARACTER demonstrated in decisions and actions

COMMITMENT to the mission despite adversity, obstacles, and challenge



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The Framework of the Army Ethic

Legal Foundations *(codified)*

Moral Foundations

Army as Profession

(Values/norms for performance of collective institution)

Legal-Institutional

The U.S. Constitution
Title 5, 10, 32, U.S. Code
Treaties of which U.S. is party
Status of Forces Agreements
Law of Land Warfare

Moral-Institutional

The U.S. Declaration of Independence
Just War Tradition
Army Culture – “Can-do”
Trust Relationships of the Profession

Individual as Professional

(Values/norms for performance of individual professionals)

Legal-Individual

Oath of:
Enlistment
Commission
Service
U.S. Code – Standards of Exemplary Conduct
Uniform Code of Military Justice
Rules of Engagement
Soldier’s Rules

Moral-Individual

Universal Norms:
Accepted Human Rights
Golden Rule of Interpersonal Behavior
Creed & Mottos:
Duty, Honor, Country
NCO Creed, Civilian Creed
7 Army Values
Soldiers Creed, Warrior Ethos

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Motivation of **Obligation**

Motivation of **Aspiration**

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U.S. Army Combined Arms Center and Fort Leavenworth

